(a) The Government have released Rs. 4545 crore foreign exchange budget for 1991-92 for the import of fertilisers, fertiliser raw materials and intermediates. Foreign exchange budget for the next year has not been allocated.

(b) Some State Governments have informed that farmers have expressed concern about the dual pricing of fertilisers resulting from the subsidy on fertilisers to small and marginal farmers.

(c) At present while the notified price of fertilisers is the same for all farmers, a subsidy is given to small & marginal farmers to cover the price difference between the prices notified on 14th August, 1991 and those prior to 25th July, 1991. At present there is no specific proposal under consideration to discontinue this subsidy scheme.

Drought in Gujarat

3312. SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many people from Saurashtra and Kutch in Gujarat are compelled to migrate with their cattle to South Gujarat on account of severe drought prevailing in these regions; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to meet this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir. So far 36475 cattle and their owners have migrated to South Gujarat due to scarcity of fodder in Kutch District during the current year.

(b) The State Government of Gujarat has opened transit camps for the migration of cattle at a distance of every 20 kms as prescribed in the Gujarat Relief Manual. In the Camps, 3 kg. of fodder and 1 kg. of concentrates per cattle is being given free of cost. Besides, relief measures have been taken to give all facilities as per State Relief Manual.

Sub-standard milk in Delhi

3313. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sub-standard and superious milk is being supplied in Delhi by private companies in pouches which almost look like the genuine ones supplied by the Delhi Milk Scheme; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir. Some complaints have been received in this regard.

(b) Amongst others, Director, Prevention of Food Adultration, Delhi Administration, Delhi, Director, Consumer Affairs, Delhi Administration, Delhi and Commissioner, Food and Civil Supplies Delhi have been requested to take suitable action against the concerned parties.

Starvation deaths in the country

3314. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of starvation deaths taken place in the country during the last two years year-wise and State-wise;

(b) what are the reasons for such starvation deaths when the country is self-sufficient in food production; and

(c) what steps Government are taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No report of starvation death has been received from any State Government/Union Territory Administration during the last two years.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Facilities to farmers

3315. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the States where availability of high yield varieties of seeds, insecticides, pesticides and counselling facilities to farmers for better and higher production are not satisfactory;

(b) the places in Uttar Pradesh where the above facilities are not adequate; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard and also to strengthen the system of disseminating advanced technology in the field of Agriculture to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Pesticides and Insecticides are availiable in adequate quantity in the whole country. The overall avilability position of seeds is satisfactory, except for minor shortages due to varietal choice. The counselling facilities to the farmers for better and higher production is being provided by the State Extention Functionaries, who provide prompt advice on various aspects of plant protection including safe and judicious use of pesticides. This is supplemented by the State Agricultural Universities and the field Stations of Central Directorate of Plant Protection who organise demonstration on Plant Protection technology and impart training to farmers from time to time.

(b) Marginal shortages of certified seeds were observed in some of the wheat, paddy, urad, Moong and Soyabean growing areas of U.P.

(c) The arrangements for the supply of seeds in the State is the responsibility of State Governments. They have been advised to make all out efforts to overcome these marginal shortages in certified seeds.

Under the Training and Visit (T&V) system Government official organise periodic training programmes to disseminate advance technology to farmers in crop protection and production technology.

In addition agriculutral universities, Research Institutions/Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) also organise various training courses for the benefit of State level and district levell agricultural extention officials under the Central Sector Scheme of minikit programmes. These trained officers organise training courses and camps at block and village levels for the benefit of farmers.

Assistance for drought affected areas of Gujarat

3316. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a request from the Government of Gujarat for financial assistance of more than Rs. 350 crores to meet the requirements of droughts affected areas in the State;

(b) whether Government have sanctioned the required amount; and

(c) if not, by when a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) A memorandum has been received from Government of Gujarat seeking additional Central assistance of about Rs. 600 crores for drought relief operations during 1991-92.

(b) and (c) The request of the State Government of Gujarat is being examined in the light of the existing scheme of the Financing Relief Expenditure and a decision will be taken shortly.

Problems of cotton-growers of Andhra Pradesh

3317. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a High Powered Committee was appointed to go into the problems of cotton growers in Guntur and Prakasam Districts of Andhra Pradesh;